Applic. #870

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY

OMAHA, NEBRASKA 68131

SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
DEPARTMENT OF PREVENTIVE MEDICINE
AND PUBLIC HEALTH

December 20, 1972

Frederic W. Nordsiek, Ph.D.
Associate Scientific Director
Council for Tobacco Research--
U.S.A., Inc.
110 East 59th Street
New York, New York 10022

Dear Dr. Nordsiek:

Professor H. J. Eysenck is an established and reknowned research psychologist who has, personally and with associates, developed numerous psychological testing devices. He has pioneered studies relating constitutional and personality variables. I would expect any study involving Professor Eysenck to produce useful data and interesting interpretations. Regarding the specific proposal entitled "The Inheritance of the Smoking Habit", I am intrigued by the investigator's intended contributions ". . . not only to partition the variation in the population into environmental and genetic causes, but also to provide information on the type of gene action involved. . . ." It is not clear to me, however, how the data to be obtained in Professor Eysenck's proposal study, could yield such information. Therefore, based on the information in the application, I am unable to render any specific judgement other than to conclude that the given proposal does not include information that would be sufficient for me to evaluate objectively.

The phenomenon of "heritability", which seems to be basic to Professor Eysenck's project, involves considerable controversy. Many geneticists consider that concept meaningless for any human behavioral or personality characteristic. The concept was originally based on studies of experimental organisms in which both genotype and environment could be controlled and duplicated. Any modification in genotype or in environment alters "heritability". Perhaps, in this regard, you might be interested in seeking the reaction of a reknowned investigator in human behavior genetics, who has previously been very critical of Professor Eysenck's interpretations: Professor Jerry Hirsch, Departments of Psychology and Zoology, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois.

I hope that the Council for Tobacco Research--U.S.A., Inc., will consider this proposal as meriting appropriate revision with specific deliberation pertaining to rectifying the several points mentioned. Dr. Eysenck should

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read some of the material published by Lillienfeld and Tokhuata and perhaps this will help him to understand some of the genetic investigations already accomplished on lung cancer.

I am very doubtful, however, that his specifically cited objectives could be met; and I don't believe that the given information is sufficient for objective evaluation of his specific proposal.

Sincerely,

Henry T. Lynch, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Department of Preventive Medicine
& Public Health

HTL/sah

cc (by (TR)
Drs. Gardner
Hockett
Huebner
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